(b) and (c) Railways under take re-placement of existing busy level crossings with Road over/under bridges on cost sharing or on deposit terms depending upon the volume of traffic at the level crossing in question. Following this criteria 4 level crossings at Bongaigaon, Rangia, Changsari and Athgaon have already been sanctioned for re-placement with Road over bridge on cost sharing basis and their work is at various stages of planning in consultation with State Govt. Proposals for Road over bridge/Road under bridge's are examined when sponsored by the State Govt, duly fulfilling all the preliminary pre-requisite from time to time.

Train accidents in, Vijayawada Division

764. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister RAILWAY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several train accidents took place in the Vijayawada division of South Central Railway due to derailments;

(b) if so, the number of such accidents in the Division during the last one year and reasons for each accident; and

(c) steps taken by the Govt, to ensure saftey?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Sir, there were 15 derailments on Vijayawada Division on South Central Railway (During 1997-98). The reason of accidents were due to human failure, equipment failure and other miscellaneous factors.

(c) Steps taken to bring down the incidence of train accidents on Indian Railways are as under:—

(i) The work of track circuiting has been accelerated on the trunk routes and other important main lines.

(ii) Modification of the signalling circuitry has been carried out to minimise changces of human error in causing accidents.

(iii) Auxiliary Warning System for giving advance warning about 'Signal at danger' to the driver of the running train has been commissioned on Bombay suburban sections.

(iv) There has been progressive increase in use of the Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance.

(v) For monitoring track geometry and running characteristics of the track, sophisticated track recording cars, oscillograph cars and portable accelerometers are being progressively used.

(vi) Maintenance facilities for coaches and wagons have been modernised and upgraded at many depots.

(vii) To prevent cases of cold breakage of axles, Routine Over Hauling Depots have been equipped with ultrasonic testing equipment for detection of flaws in the axles.

(viii) Whistle boards/speed breakers and road signs have been provided at unmanned level crossings and visibility for drivers has been improved.

(ix) Autido-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossing are conducted.

(x) Steps have been taken to prevent inflammable and explosive materials from being carried in passnger trains.

(xi) Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernised including use of Simulators for training of drivers.

(xii) Refresher courses are regularly organised at specified intervals.

(xiii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training.

(xiv) Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff.